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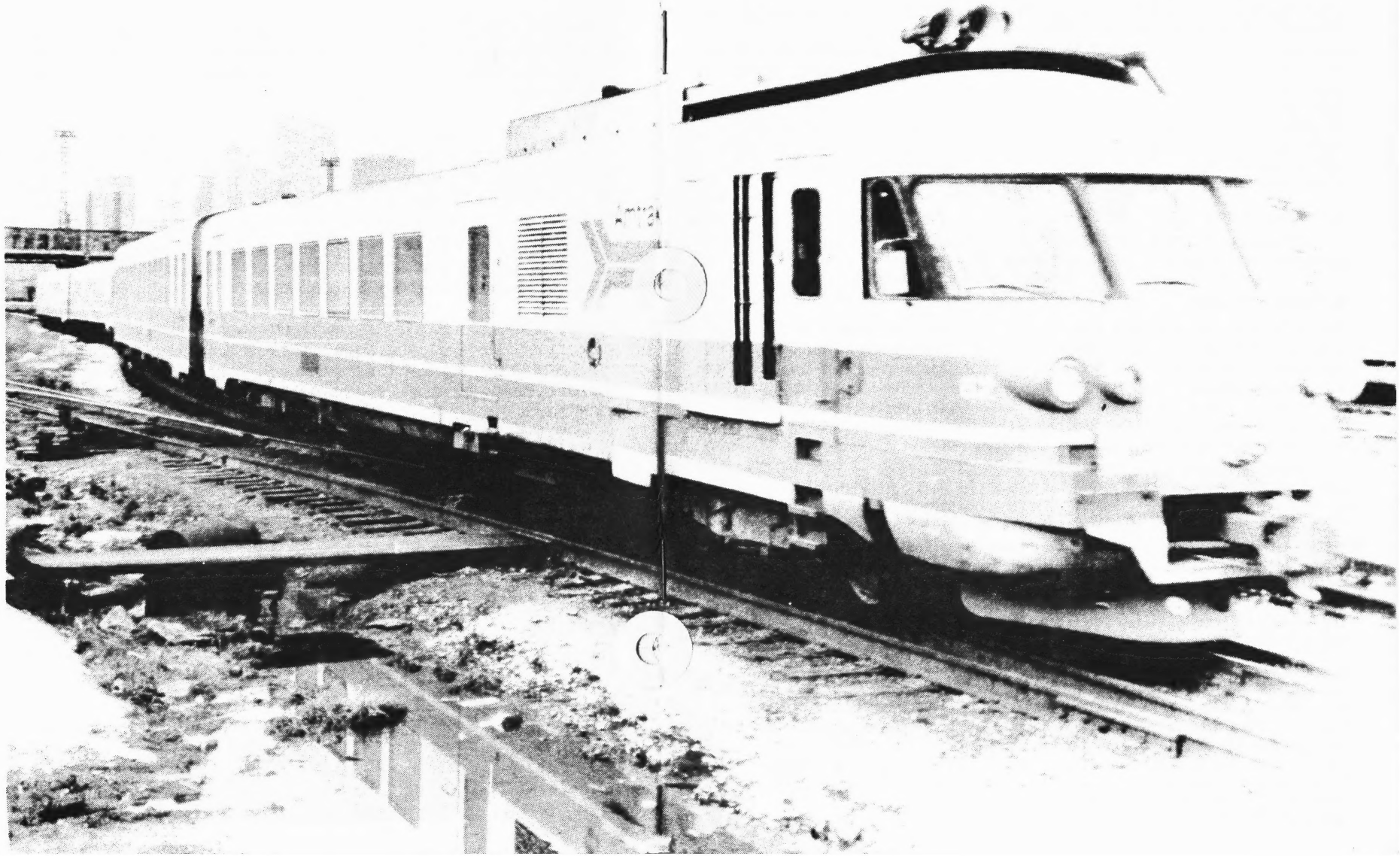
VOL. 4 NO. 8
SECOND ISSUE OF
APRIL 1974
#82



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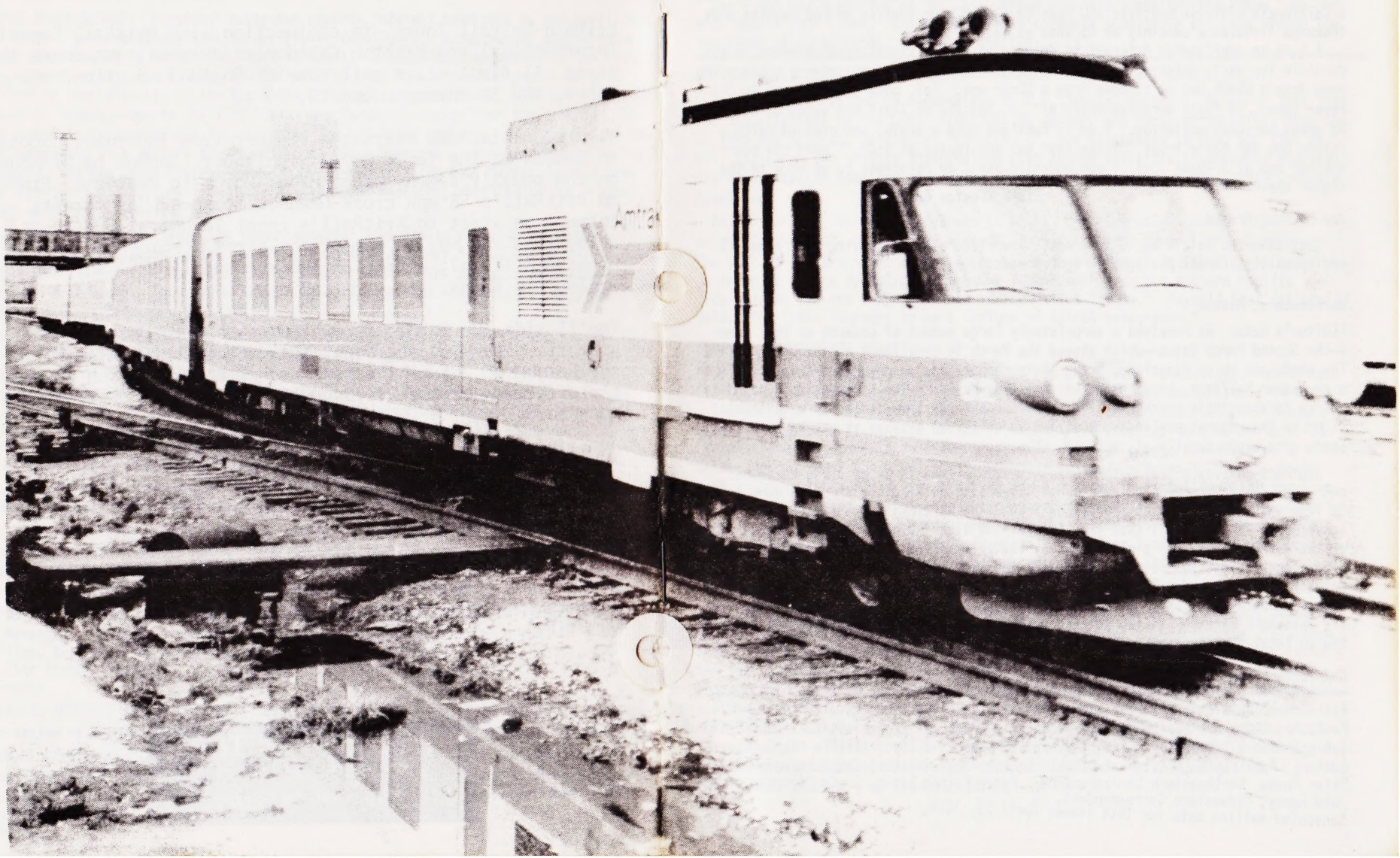

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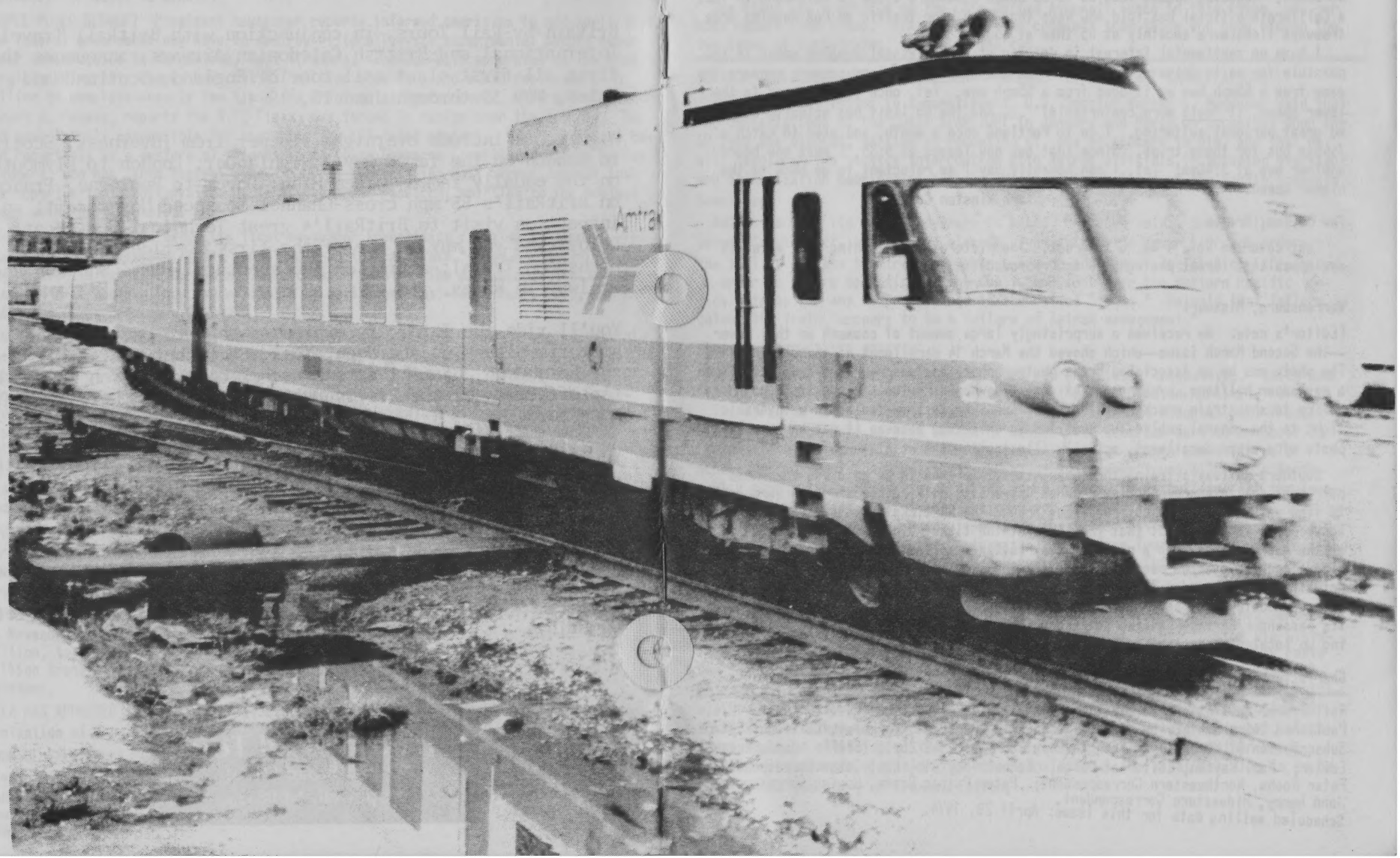

## LETTERS

I find Dr. Ong's letter in the last issue very interesting and in need of comment.

Dr. Ong is correct in stating that several states, e.g., New Hampshire and Oregon, were cutting auto deaths rates despite the existence of high speed limits, but this tells only part of the story. Oregon got these reductions thru improved law enforcement. Yet, the deaths have been declining at an even faster rate since the 55mph limit was imposed.

As for the claim that reduced speeds reduce the maximum capacity of freeways, anyone who has read Helen Leavitt's Superhighway, Superhoax, has read about the calculations made by Anthony Downs in 1962 on the basis of engineering data published in 1955. This all shows that maximum capacity is achieved with a speed limit of 40-50mph. Reducing speeds from 65 to 55 comes somewhere close to this--and in fact a California official has told ABC News that rush hour traffic on Los Angeles area freeways flows more smoothly at 55 than at 65.

I have no sentimental interest in driving at 55. A visual problem makes it impossible for me to drive so I have to ride Greyhound buses, and scenery appears the same from a 65mph bus as it does from a 55mph one. Yet, once you get used to the lower speed, it feels more comfortable! ... And the 55 limit has actually caused md great personal suffering. I go to Portland once a month, and used to catch a 7:45am bus for these trips. Since that bus now leaves at 9:35, I must now board another bus at 3:40am! Yet, I can honestly say I am reluctant to go back to the higher speed.

Clark Winston Cox, Jr.

The Dalles, Oregon

That cover on Vol. 4 No. 6 is great. The picture has something that makes it eye-appealing. Great photography and reproduction.

Paul M. Clements

Warrensburg, Missouri

(Editor's note: We received a surprisingly large amount of comment on that cover --the Second March issue--which showed the March 14 derailment of the STATE HOUSE. The photo was by an Associated Press photographer, and was reproduced directly from a newspaper halftone, by arrangement with Wide World Photos. Altho it is not our policy to show train wrecks on RTN covers--we like to show trains in a favorable light to the general public--we deviated in this case because it was an appealing photo of a minor derailment, actually illustrating the relative safety of trains.)

Southern Railway's trains thru Charlottesville seem to be enjoying increased patronage due to energy problems. When University of Virginia students were trying to find ways out of town before spring break, the SR ticket agent was quoted in the local paper to the effect that the lines at the ticket window were as long as those at the gas stations. On a recent Sunday (after gasoline had become readily available) I counted over 50 people waiting for the evening PIEDMONT to Washington. Altho not all of them boarded the train, there were not enough seats in the waiting room to accommodate everyone. Southern has alsobeen running ads in the local paper for its passenger service (unlike Amtrak, which seems to be missing a good bet by passing up local advertising).

Thomas F. Miller

Charlottesville, Virginia

Rail Travel Newsletter, Vol. 4, No. 8 (Whole No. 82), Second Issue of April, 1974. Published twice monthly by Message Media, P.O. Box 9007, Berkeley, California 94709. Subscription $7.00 per year; single copy 30¢ (vol. 1-3 25¢). STAFF: James Russell, Editor; Paul Rayton, Editor-at-Large; Kenneth Maylath, East Coast Correspondent; Peter Roehm, Northeastern Correspondent; Peter Putnam Bretz, Roving Correspondent; John Ferry, Midwestern Correspondent.
Scheduled mailing date for this issue: April 29, 1974.

ON THE COVER: One of Amtrak's French-built Turboliners leaves Chicago for St. Louis on March 23, 1974. Photo by Jack Ferry.

These new trains are evidently now Amtrak's most reliable pieces of equipment, with about 100% reliability the past few months. According to writer Stephen Aug of the Washington Star-News (April 9), United Aircraft, which has designed the domed, airliner-like Turbo used in the Northeast Corridor and by Canadian National, is pressing the Senate Commerce Committee to influence Amtrak to order more trains of their own design, rather than the French-designed product, which would be built by Rohr Corporation in California. Aug reports that UA is now talking of Turbine II, a newer design said to be 25% lighter and use 30% less fuel than the French train. It also has wider seats and a 50% wider aisle than the Turboliners, runs at a higher speed, takes curves at a 25% faster speed, and accelerates faster than the French models.

See Glenn Lee's article on the CN's United Aircraft Turbo in this issue, and our news report last issue. RTN would welcome comments from those who have ridden the two types of turbotrains, comparing the two.

## SENATOR CRITICIZES AMTRAK MANAGEMENT "FAILURE" IN STARLIGHT CANCELLATIONS

In an April 11 letter to a constituent, U.S. Senator Warren G. Magnuson said that the cancellations of the COAST STARLIGHT in January and March on occasions when the SP line was blocked, in lieu of rerouting it, are of concern to him, and that he will "explore" the service interruption with Amtrak officials in upcoming oversight and authorization hearings on Amtrak. Magnuson is chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee.

Amtrak can run its trains anywhere it wants, Magnuson said. Quote: "The Rail Passenger Service Act, as amended, already gives Amtrak the power (through orders of the ICC) to operate its trains anywhere, and no additional legislation is required in order to assure operation of the COAST STARLIGHT over the Western Pacific 'inside gateway' or any other trackage in the United States." He said that failure to detour the train "appears to be a failure of Amtrak management."

## MORE NEW LOCOMOTIVES ARRIVING

Amtrak has begun taking delivery of more new EMD diesel locomotives. Units Nos. 543 and 541 were seen pulling into Chicago on the FLORIDIAN on April 21.

The first of 13 new locomotives ordered by the Northwest Suburban Mass Transit District was put into service on the Milwaukee Road suburban service on April 6. The unit is sheathed in bright stainless steel with an orange and white color scheme on the front. All units will be named for member towns within the Northwest District. The EMD division of GMC in La Grange, IL is building all the locomotives, which are F-40-C types, designed for suburban service, following the District's guidelines. They are equipped with the latest devices for noise reduction and smoke-free operation. (The Northwest Suburban Mass Transit Dist. was organized in March 1971 to service transit needs between Elgin and Chicago.)

## INSPECTION MADE FOR NEW EXPERIMENTAL AMTRAK ROUTE

Amtrak people in mid-April began on-site inspection for a possible new Denver to Kansas City route as an alternative to the experimental Chicago-Boston via Cleveland route already proposed. According to reports, the Denver-Kansas City route and the Cleveland route are the two major candidates for the first experimental Amtrak route required by last year's congressional legislation--Amtrak must initiate one such route yearly. Advantages of the Denver route, according to Amtrak spokesmen, are that it would be cheaper to run and require less equipment, since it could be an extension of the present NATIONAL LIMITED. On the other hand, Cleveland represents a greater, unserved population. The final decision is to be made by the Secretary of Transportation.

# canadian news letter

NORTHERN ALBERTA RAILWAYS Edmonton-Dawson Creek overnight passenger train No. 1 & 2 (see "The Little Railways of Canada," RTN, 2nd Jan. issue) will be discontinued effective June 1, by order of the Canadian Transport Commission, dated April 11.

GREATER WINNIPEG WATER District Railway adopts its summer schedule May 18, which means the addition of Sat., Sun., & holiday passenger service. The train leaves St. Boniface (suburban Winnipeg) at 8am and reaches Indian Bay (Waugh) at 11:15 after a 92-mile trip. The return lasts from 4pm to 7:15. Regular GWWD service year-around consists of a Mon. & Fri. mixed train, leaving St. Boniface 9am and Indian Bay 3pm for the same 3¼-hr trip.

GO-TRAIN SERVICE to the area northwest of Toronto will begin Apr. 29, when 3 daily roundtrips will be run. They'll leave the suburban community of Georgetown 7am, 7:25am and 7:50am for a 50-min run to Toronto Union, including a stop at the Bloor subway. Return runs will depart downtown 4:45pm, 5:10pm and 5:35pm. The trains will deadhead to and from night storage yards near the downtown area to reduce noise pollution in the suburban zone caused by engines idling at night.

THE LONG-AWAITED Barrie-Toronto commuter train, ordered by the CTC and operated by CN after years of politicking by commuters, carried 124 passengers in and 83 back on April 1, the first day of service. Many on the first inbound run were newspaper reporters and railfans. CN said the 5-car train will be shortened if loads do not materialize as hoped. Federal and provincial officials and political aspirants greeted riders on the first runs, and "first-day" red and white buttons were handed out.

ELECTRIC RAILWAY LINE will be built from downtown Montreal to the new Ste. Scholastique (Mirabel) airport 40 miles to the north, Quebec Transport Minister Raymond Mailloux has announced. The new line should be running by 1980. Mailloux said his department had studied alternative technologies, and that none had merit for Montreal's colder climate. Ontario Transport Minister John Rhodes, now busy pushing the mag-lev GO-Urban system for Toronto, will meet with Quebec officials to discuss reasons they rejected the Krauss-Maffei system Ontario supports so enthusiastically. Rhodes said the Quebec decision was not a disappointment, since he'd known for some time that it was coming.

THE PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL, effective May 19, will be rerouted via the upper level track at Everett, Washington, station, also used by Amtrak's NORTH COAST HIAWATHA. While this gives easier access to the P.I. from the waiting room, 6 minutes will be added to the schedule, and the train will bounce and clank over the various diamonds on the route north from the east portal of the Everett Tunnel. An unusual movement was seen on the train south from Vancouver March 23--thru cars from Canada to Los Angeles for a Disney Tours special. Besides its regular 4 cars, the P.I. carried GN 1251 diner and Amtrak coaches 4480, 4815, 4500, 4818. Two E units powered it.

CANADIAN NATIONAL IS receiving the first of an order of 106 new 3000hp diesels built at GMD in London, Ont. Many will be assigned to CN's Mountain Region main lines in Alberta and B.C.. The new high-speed units will bump older power for branch and switching assignments.

CP RAIL STOCKHOLDERS will be asked May 1 to approve purchase of a 57-mile section of the Maine Central Railroad between Mattawakeag and Vanceboro. CP plans to pay Maine Central $5 million cash and $1 million par value of CP-held Soo Line general mortgage 4% bonds. MEC will get trackage rights on the line, which serves as a part of CP's main route from Montreal to Saint John, N.B.

ST. LAWRENCE VALLEY Railway Society is putting on a "super excursion" Montreal to Whitehall, NY on May 11, with a special train powered by Alco PA engines running 325 miles where the Adirondack Mountains follow the shore of Lake Champlain. Info from Box 122, Station N, Montreal, Quebec H2X 3N2. (U.S. mail to Quebec province was embargoed in mid-April due to a postal strike in Montreal.)



AMTRAK HAS PURCHASED 6 sleeping cars from Canadian National. These are "Bay" series cars #2022-7, a set of 10-5 sleepers, which will be renumbered by Amtrak as 2504-9 respectively. Original names are "Buckley Bay," "Hudson Bay," "Chaleur Bay," "Glase Bay," "Thunder Bay," and "Fortune Bay," and they were built in 1954 by Pullman-Standard. Last issue we mentioned the 6 diners and 5 round-end dome sleepers purchased from CP for use in the States. It is said that those cars are destined for the N.C.HIAWATHA.

TRANSPORT MINISTER JEAN Marchand's proposal that CP Rail be nationalized (see last issue) and the nation's transportation policies be subject to exhaustive review has thrown shock waves thru the Canadian transportation industry, with matters from Crows Nest Pass grain rates to various subsidy legislation getting attention from politicians and the press. This will undoubtedly increase public discussion of passenger service.

TORONTO'S 2.7-MILE SUBWAY extension, on the Yonge line from York Mills to Finch, opened March 30 with little incident. The closer in-town sections of the line were more crowded, as predicted, with some trains taking up to 90 seconds to make the busy Bloor-Yonge stop. The 800-car parking lot at the new northern terminal was overflowing its capacity less than a week after the service started. Riders complained about the long walk from entry gates to the train platform at Finch station.

# Washington—Thanksgiving vs Easter

**by Ken Maylath**

Thanksgiving, 1973--it seems rather long ago so far as rail travel is concerned; what with the energy crisis having crested since then. We reported on the scene at Union Station, Washington during the busy Sunday of that weekend, and drew some comparisons with the previous year. How about Easter, 1974 at this major rail center for the Northeast Corridor?

Gasoline is much more available in the Northeast now than during February, when the biggest increases in rail traffic were experienced. Also, travel is not as concentrated on Sunday of the Easter weekend compared with Sunday at Thanksgiving. The day after Easter is an extra day off for many. And school vacation periods aren't as uniform at Easter as they are for the brief Thanksgiving period.

Indeed, most passenger counts were not as high this time in Washington. Not that it was just another Sunday. As at Thanksgiving, Metroliners were sold out thru the afternoon and evening. Extra equipment and extra sections were in evidence. It was also a later crowd--that is, the heaviest concentration of passengers seemed to be a couple hours later than last November. Operations were noticeably better in terms of on-time performance.

The MINUTE MAN, due in Washington at 4:55, was a full hour late in November, and discharged 800 passengers. This time it was on time, and carried 600-650 into Washington. At Thanksgiving the SOUTHERN CRESCENT operated as two sections into Washington and one section on the Southern. This time, one section into the nation's capital, but two on the Southern. The inbound section was also the latest train of the day, in or out (30 minutes), during my sojourn at Union Station. The outbound JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY departed with a load of 90 or so; at Thanksgiving it was 125-150.

During the evening, tho, crowds were markedly larger on the northbound departures. The NEW YORKER, leaving at 7:05, loaded about 550 at Thanksgiving, but 750 this time. At 9pm the NIGHT CAP, which left with only 200 in November, doubled its loading. Also up was the Cumberland-to-Washington BLUE RIDGE--up from 75 to 120. The MONTREALER, one section in November, was two sections in April--one composed of the thru equipment to Montreal, the other coaches only, going as far as New Haven.

As for the Florida trains, so heavily used this season, the northbound SILVER STAR got out around 20 minutes late, while the southbound SILVER METEOR and CHAMPION were right on the money in and out. Both were 10-15 minutes behind at Thanksgiving.

Finally, operations at Union Station itself seemed well under control. Gates opened at the proper time with adequate P.A. announcements. Lines at the ticket windows weren't bad for the most part. And the TV monitors showing arrivals and departures were up to date and trouble-free.

## QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"People are driving their cars about as they always have--wastefully, in terms of gas, and often, in terms of frequency. The Great Gas Shortage seems over. Was it more of a media event than a serious crisis? Anyway there's argument here that the public has gone apathetic about the energy crisis and wasn't cooperating in energy conservation either. If all this is true, I wonder whether we'll ever grow up as a people. We do have an energy shortage; it's with us, and will be with us."

--Syndicated columnist Nick Thimmesch, April 19

## SLIP OF THE MONTH CLUB***

"FIVE DAILY TRAINS A DAY BETWEEN CHICAGO & SPOKANE."

--Cincinnati Enquirer Travel Section, April 14

(Some of them have got to be freights.)

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RUNDOWN OF SUMMER SERVICE ON THE NATION'S RAILS

In earlier issues we've reported on changes in Amtrak service coming up this summer. This brief summary will bring this info together and add some more. Amtrak's summer timetable will be out effective May 19. At that time, a new train, the EXPO 74 will begin running Seattle-Spokane to service the Spokane Expo 74, the service continuing thru Sept. 14. NORTH COAST HIAWATHA changes from tri-weekly to daily and the EMPIRE BUILDER will have its Minneapolis-Seattle schedule lengthened. Other schedule lengthening will occur on the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR, PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL, and ILLINOIS ZEPHYR. The two Portland-Seattle corridor trains will connect with the EXPO 74. The MONTREALER has some time adjustments. Baggage checking is now available on the SAN JOAQUIN. The SUPER CHIEF is to be renamed the GOLDEN STATE, most likely, and the TEXAS CHIEF becomes the LONE STAR. (See Mixed Train column for summer GOLDEN STATE consists.) Food service has been restored on two Chicago-Milwaukee trains--#322 and 325 now have buffet cars, after passenger complaints. The other Hiawatha Service trains carry no food. Scheduled COAST STARLIGHT consist is 8 or 9 coaches, 8100-series snack car, TV-equipped lounge, diner, and 3 sleepers (a 10-5, 10-6, and 8-2). The EMPIRE BUILDER is to carry 5 sleepers, for expected heavy traffic to Expo 74, including the ex-NP lounge sleepers. The NORTH COAST HIAWATHA should have 4 sleepers. The GEORGE WASHINGTON/JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY is to be re-routed onto C&O between Chicago and Cincinnati. The ILLINOIS ZEPHYR (Chicago to Quincy) now has its ex-CNW bi-level equipment back (as of April 12)--it had been running recently with several dome coaches plus the dome-observation car "Linoma," leased from Autoliner Corporation. Hiawatha Service is now using unrefurbished Milwaukee Road cars. Look for a number of leased Canadian Pacific cars on Amtrak trains this summer--perhaps as many as 120 to help alleviate the equipment shortage. (This suggests also a potential car shortage on Canadian trains.) Train #324 (Milwaukee-Chicago) will now depart at 11:20am instead of 10:20. The EMPIRE BUILDER will carry no local passengers Chicago-Milwaukee (presently the BUILDER has normal standing room only out of Milwaukee). An extra SAN DIEGAN is to be added on Friday and Sunday, as last summer.

The non-Amtrak Rio Grande has new times now effective on its RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR, as listed in Amtrak's April 10 timetable. The westbound train leaves Denver 7am and arrives Salt Lake 9pm, both times 30 minutes earlier, for better connections with Amtrak's SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR. Intermediate points on both eastbound and westbound runs are changed up to 30 minutes and more. The new Midwest AUTO-TRAIN makes its first run Louisville-Sanford, FL 5:30pm May 24, and every third day thereafter. Toll-free reservations number is 800-424-8670.



# FRIDAY THE 13th ON THE TURBO

**by Glenn Lee**

The morning after the last day of the Fall Term at U.C. Davis, December 1968, I departed eastward for a visit to Ottawa. It was a relief to be away from the busy campus, and the trip east, on the CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR, INTERNATIONAL LIMITED, and CN's No. 44, the 5pm departure from Toronto, was pleasant. The trains were not crowded, and the early arrival of winter made for some beautiful scenes all the way from Sacramento to the Valley of the Ottawa.

My arrival in the Great Hall of Toronto Union December 10 was made more interesting by large signs, perhaps leftovers from Religious Revivalry, marking the 10 a.m. press departure of the CN Turbotrain. After former CN President Donald Gordon had first announced the Turbo for service during the 1967 Montreal Expo, the Turbo project had been plagued by delay after delay. An air of business and anticipation filled the Great Hall; but since I had things to do during the Toronto layover, I did not wait to watch, nor to get pictures of the departing press run. I was content to read thru the early edition of the Star, whose front page was filled with turbomaterials, including dignitaries posing with the train's striking locomotive "nose."

Later in the afternoon, the Star's front page had been remade, this time showing Turbo's nose smashed in by an encounter with a meat truck at Kingston, Ontario. It had been the most over-covered grade-crossing collision in railway history, a CN exec said privately. Not only had most of the reporters aboard the Montreal-bound Turbo been watching on closed circuit TV as Turbo rammed the truck; but one enterprising cameraman had clicked at the right moment, catching large sections of truck and beefsteak spreading to the winds at the moment of impact. It made a widely-reprinted photo. Adding insult to injury, the Toronto-bound Turbo a few moments later arrived at the scene, and several score additional journalists were at the accident site to take copious notes.

All in all, Dec. 10, 1968 had not been one of CN's better days. Yet the full-page ads announcing Turbo filled every Eastern Canadian edition published, and the prominent nose of the Turbo was visible in much CN promotional literature.

My stay in Ottawa concluded on a cold Friday the 13th in the Ottawa Union Station. CN had announced that Turbo would begin daily service Montreal-Toronto on Dec. 12; with departures at 12:45pm and 6:10pm. I was able to obtain a reservation at the Sparks Street CN ticket office late the 12th, and felt compelled to take a ride. Our 7:35am departure from Ottawa to Montreal was on time, and I had a comfortable and interesting ride to Montreal, arriving in a little over two hours after crossing some barren, wintry landscape.

With Turbo not due to leave until 12:45pm, I had an opportunity to prowl downtown Montreal, but cut the walking tour short because of the cold weather; and chose instead to explore the creative and colourful world of the Montreal Metro, the city's new rapid transit system with the rubber-tire cars, which behave as if they were MU trolley buses.

Noon came all too quickly, and I reported back to Central Station early, expecting that there would be capacity crowds for the Great Turbo. Following the publicity splashes, and the splashing publicity of the grade crossing accident, I could not imagine anything but a sell-out run. At 12:30, Turbo was announced, and I was among the first down the short stairway to track level, wondering where everybody could be. CN's Morning Rapido, due out 11am, was still operating, but I couldn't imagine anyone taking the 5-hour Rapido when a 4-hour Turbo was available.

My assigned car was almost empty, perhaps 3 or 4 others aboard. Still no crowd, and I began to believe that a superstitious Quebec population along with a heavy loyalty to a dining-car-equipped Rapido, was going to make it a

slim passenger list for the 12:45 departure. I was right. By train time, there were only 50-60 aboard the sleek liner, maybe one-seventh of capacity.

WHHRRRR-ROAR-WHIIIIINE went the turbine engines, following a short "ka-pubb" sound. "Oh-oh," I thought, "I'm on the wrong plane. Get me out of here." This was my genetic dislike for airplanes and anything concerning the airline industry coming to the fore. For one brief moment, as the WHIIIINE was ringing thru my head, I was determined to grab my bag and get off the Damn Thing. But the Travel Me intervened and reassured me that we were most definitely on wheels; on rails; and that even if anything DID happen, with a crowd this light, I'd be the first one off the smoldering remains.

A pleasant voice urged caution--that the doors were about to close--and I began to relax just a bit. Once the doors were shut, most of the WHIINE decibels were abated; and with ever so quiet a nudge, Turbo was underway.

I had done some calculating, and came to a conclusion (reinforced by reading published reports later) that my set of Turbo equipment had been the one in the meat truck incident three days earlier. But no worry. Turbo seemed quiet, and very pleasant, even as we bumped thru the interlocking under the trolley wire leading south from Central Station. Bits and pieces of CN commuter equipment; and even newer lightweight equipment passing by seemed suddenly obsolete as Turbo gently picked up some speed. The little booklet in the seats asked passengers to remain seated, as Turbo was likely to sway a bit going thru the switches. I was obedient, but once around the big bend of the tracks near Ladine, moved rear to the coach-class dome located above the rear engine compartment. I did so in time to get some closeup views of what a number of writers have described as the "worst slums in Canada," those adjacent to the CN main. Even a short distance to the north, and up the hill, the CP main runs thru a much better neighborhood.

Within a few minutes we were on the straight flash of double track south of Cote St. Luc, and heading for Dorval; normally a stop for the Rapido trains. But our express Turbo flashed thru, giving little attention to either the adjacent CP Rail commuter station or the Air Terminal to the north. Speed picked up, and we were seemingly in the high 80s or lower 90s when we overtook a CP Rail westbound commuter train on the right-of-way immediately to the north. For a moment it seemed as if we would pass the old wine-red commute cars with all respect and courtesy, but before Turbo passed the locomotive, we were FLYING! I wondered, slightly, what the Turbo must have looked like from the CP train--a wondrous, flashing super-cigar on wheels. In moments, only a pin prick of the headlight of the CP train could be seen thru the grey midafternoon, far to the rear.

We slowed slightly, it seemed, for the crossing of the Ottawa River, and then picked up what seemed like tremendous amounts of speed at first. An air of relaxation began to settle over the train. I began taking photos from the dome as a break in the dark day became apparent. Wanting to be certain, for I did not know when I would be back, I got out my light meter and was careful with the settings. I did not want Firday the 13th problems to botch the camerawork.

"Get 'em while you can" said an older, heavyset man, who had been feeling no pain after several CN drinks. "Oh, yes, this is a GREAT day for us train buffs," I replied. "Well, get 'em now, thisss ma' be yur lass' chance," he said ponderously.

I asked him what he meant. "Well, iss Friday the 13th, ya' know," he said, "and thisss baby's gunna jump the tracks!" I inquired if he felt this way because he was superstitious. He said he was, and that the Turbo was a bad-luck bummer.

"Don't be silly," I answered. "Hundreds of thousands of planes, ships, trains, buses and who-knows-what-else will all leave and arrive thousands of places safely today. There is nothing to worry about." Reassured publicly, I felt deflated at the air of gloom the man had generated, despite the free CN pretzels, and returned to my coach. We were literally hurtling across lower Ontario, and the pace was breathtaking,

(continued on page 13)



## TRAIN RIDERSHIP CONTINUES HIGH

In the last issue we printed passenger counts for Jan. and Feb. on Amtrak trains, with percentage of increase over 1973 months. As we go to press, Amtrak is releasing similar figures. These were previously said to be of great interest, as they would give some indication of whether ridership would continue high as the energy crisis began to ease. The figures Amtrak is releasing will show that overall ridership was up in March (compared with March, 1973) by 45%.

The following are sample figures, percentage of increase by route: L.A.-Seattle 85, Chicago-Oakland 83, Chicago-L.A. 35, Chicago-Seattle (EMPIRE BUILDER) 55, Chicago-Seattle (NORTH COAST) 69, Empire Service (N.Y.-Buffalo) 104, Boston-N.Y. 60, L.A.-San Diego 65, Seattle-Portland 44, Chicago-St. Louis 53, Chicago-Detroit 82, L.A.-New Orleans 53. Ridership between New York and Washington was up 23%, with a count of 739,-666 riders, the highest count made since the DOT began such records in 1969.

Amtrak operated a total of 6,346 trains in March, and 72.3% of these were judged to arrive on time at their destinations. This compares with 63% in February. Turbos (of both types) were 72% on time, Metroliners 74.1%, other corridor trains 77.8%, and long distance trains 55.8%. Of long-distance routes, Chicago-Seattle and Chicago-L.A. topped 90% on time (90.9 and 97.2 respectively). Of short-distance trains, two new services showed over 90% on-time: the SAN JOAQUIN 94.2%, and the BLACK HAWK 91.9%.

Meanwhile, with the increased availability of gasoline in April, the Associated Press is reporting that highway travel is returning to pre-oil embargo levels. The new federal energy chief John C. Sawhill is quoted as saying that "There are as many people on the road now as there were in September." The Arab oil embargo ended on March 18. The AP said, however, that Amtrak and the airlines are continuing to do strong business, and attributed this to lower highway speed limits and higher gasoline prices.

An Amtrak spokesman told RTN that the rail corporation is receiving 45,000-50,000 calls daily for information and reservations. It is in the process of "doubling" the size of its reservations system. There are at present over 200,000 advance bookings recorded in Amtrak's computerized system.

## NEW AMTRAK BOARD NOMINATIONS ANNOUNCED

The White House on April 23 announced the names of six of the nine nominees it is sending the Senate for confirmation to fill Amtrak's Board of Directors seats. The names, along with the length of appointment, are as follows: Roger Lewis (2 yrs), Charles Luna (2 yrs), Frank S. Besson Jr. (3 yrs)--all incumbents. New names are: Prof. Edward Ullman of Seattle (see RTN, last issue), 4 yrs; Mary J. Head of Oklahoma City, 3 yrs; and Joseph V. MacDonald (who worked to reinstate the MONTREALER), 2 yrs. The last 3 named are all consumer representatives. Three additional names will be proposed by the White House, and along with the 3 member railroad representatives and the DOT Secretary, they will constitute the new 13-member board.

The Senate Commerce Committee will hold hearings on the nominees when all the names are in. Chairman of the committee is Warren G. Magnuson (WA). Other members are John O. Pastore (RI), Vance Hartke (IN), Philip A. Hart (MI), Howard W. Cannon (NV), Russell B. Long (LA), Frank E. Moss (UT), Ernest F. Hollings (SC), Daniel K. Inouye (HI), John V. Tunney (CA), Adlai E. Stevenson III (IL), Norris Cotton (NH), James B. Pearson (KS), Robert P. Griffin (MI), Howard H. Baker Jr. (TN), Marlow W. Cook (KY), Ted Stevens (AK), and J. Glenn Beall Jr. (MD). The address of each Senator is Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510.

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# NEW JERSEY

LAND OF COMMUTER CONTRASTS

by Ken Maylath

Recently I've been taking a look at the situation in New Jersey, home of several commuter-carrying railroads. A lot has been and is happening here, thanks to a forward attitude and generous amounts of cash from the state. A decision was faced as the 1960's progressed. The precarious finances of the Jersey Central came to the point where a complete shutdown of the line's commuter service was threatened. The Pennsylvania (later Penn Central) and Erie Lackawanna were increasingly concerned about their commuter burdens. Equipment, already appropriate for steam-power museums, wasn't getting any newer. Population, much of it commuter-oriented, continued to increase. In typical fashion, highway construction couldn't seem to keep pace--not to mention its cost in largely urban areas. New Jersey opted for improved commuter service. Today, with a sweeping program of renewal underway, we see a time of contrast.

New Jersey's most extensive and variety-filled suburban network is run by the Erie Lackawanna. It's a combination of electrified and diesel-powered lines resulting from the merger of the Erie and Lackawanna more than a decade ago. Even before Amtrak, commuter service was all the EL offered (after the demise of its last New York-Chicago run). Aside from the New York area, the EL's sole service is the Cleveland-Youngstown run saved from oblivion recently by energy-conscious authorities in Ohio. Its longest passenger run today stretches from Hoboken, on the western shore of the Hudson, to Port Jervis, 87 miles away on the former Erie main line. Two train each way make the complete trip on weekdays, and one on Saturday, with most of the remainder terminating at Suffern, 30 miles out on the New Jersey-New York border. There is currently no Sunday service, but Saturday runs have more than doubled in the past couple years. The Pascack Valley line meanders from Hoboken 30 miles north to Spring Valley, NY and offers half a dozen round trips on weekdays and nothing on weekends.

Most of the former Lackawanna lines were electrified more than 40 years ago, and continue to use the original MU equipment. The exception is the Boonton line. This partly single-track line twists thru fashionable suburbs for 34 miles to Denville, where it rejoins the electrified Hoboken to Dover line for several miles into Dover. A couple weekday runs continue to Netcong--another 10 miles. It's actually 2 miles further to Dover via the electrified main line of the former Lackawanna than it is via Boonton. The line offers the most frequent service--hourly from Hoboken to Dover 7 days a week, and additional trains to Morristown (30 miles) each hour weekdays. A little 4-mile branch from Newark to Montclair offers weekday service only. Rather interesting is the interurban-style single-track proposition leaving the main line at Summit (20 miles) and wandering thru some of the state's most exclusive suburban districts to the tiny community which gives the line its name (another 22 miles). During rush hours, Gladstone trains operate independently all the way to Hoboken. At other times they connect with Dover runs at Summit. 7-day-a-week service is provided, tho rather infrequently on Sunday.

My Saturday of EL sampling got underway at the Newark station. Like most of the stations on the former Lackawanna lines, it is vintage. Even the smaller stations are usually stone affairs largely in their original condition. Resurfaced platforms and high-intensity lighting are in evidence here and there as a concession to the 1970's.

Train 917, an early afternoon Hoboken-Dover local, ground to a stop a couple of minutes late. I joined a dozen or so passengers boarding and in a few moments we were heading west toward East Orange. These are the original MU cars purchased at the time ofelectrification on the former Lackawanna main--olive drab on the outside, vintage on the inside. Closely-spaced walkover seats, single-pane windows which open to make up for the lack of that new-fangled air conditioning, ceiling lights with frosted globes. No shortage of assorted rattles. Some suburbanites have no doubt retired after riding these cars all of their adult working lives.



With frequent stops, we worked our way thru the heavily-populated area of East Orange, Orange and South Orange. Then up a long, twisting grade to Summit, which is aptly named. We were several minutes late. This was the end of my ride, for about 10 minutes at least, till the arrival of a Dover-Hoboken train. During that interval I checked the station and the string of Gladstone branch cars spending the weekend on several yard tracks. I was surprised to see a number of camera-carrying individuals on the platform waiting for the inbound train. These turned out to be a group of rail buffs visiting the New York area for the weekend and checking out the EL's commuter operations as I was.

The return trip began a couple minutes late, on a similar type car. Heading downgrade this time, our speed was higher and the bumps and banging along with it. We reached 60 or so between a couple of the more widely separated stops. This time I stayed with the train thru Newark for the final 8 miles--across the Jersey meadows, under the PC main, thru a series of 3 tunnels penetrating the Hudson River bluffs and into the complex of tracks at Hoboken. Arrival came just about on time, at a quarter past the hour. BART it definitely wasn't--but these cars have performed decades of dependable service. On-time performance has been traditionally good.

Now they appear to be nearing the end of the line. Their replacement is tied in with plans for conversion of the EL's 3000-volt DC catenary to a modern, high-voltage AC system. About a year ago, the New Jersey Dept. of Transportation asked the federal government for $94 million to cover 2/3 of the cost of this, as well as extending the electrification from Dover to Netcong and purchasing 200 new high-speed cars. The state share of the $141 million project is already available. It will certainly be a couple years at least before the old workhorses run their last mile.

After checking timetables for my next move, I looked around. Until a few years ago one could cross the Hudson by ferry or use the PATH rapid transit line--essentially a subway-style operation--under the water. Now PATH, with a fleet of recently acquired cars, does the whole job, running on the tightest of headways during rush hours. The 18 or so tracks in the station are busy indeed on weekdays, but the pace was leisurely at 4pm on a Saturday. The venerable old MU's stood side by side with sleek new commuter coaches and low-nose diesels. My next ride was again to be of the vintage variety--this time non-electrified. On track 17 a string of 4 ex-Erie Stilwell coaches waited behind a former Lackawanna A unit. Many Stilwells have found their way to tourist lines, including the steam-powered Skunk train of the California Western. Few remain on the EL. The ones I rode were heading to Port Jervis on the only Saturday run beyond Suffern over the former Erie main. They had been upgraded too, with air conditioning and improved seats. Why the oldest equipment on EL's longest passenger run, with scores of spanking new coaches available? The answer is apparently New Jersey's reluctance to have its new cars used on a run which lies most in New York State. There are plans, by the way, to build a track connection at Secaucus, in the Jersey meadows, to the PC, giving trains on the former Erie access to Penn Station. New gas- turbine-electric cars now under development would be used.

At the stroke of 4, with a good weekend crowd aboard, we were off. The track again was fair, and the riding characteristics of the cars nothing toget excited about. Few passengers detrained at the first few stops, including Patterson, where more direct bus service is available into New York (without change). A sizable crowd got off where I did--at Ridgewood, a pleasant community 20 miles from Hoboken. The wait would be about 10 minutes before a Suffern-Hoboken train came in. Coming up, my first ride on the brand new cars--in service but a couple of years.

On time, at 4:50, the headlight shone up the track--not from the front of the diesel unit, but the end of a coach. This, you see, is a push-pull operation and Hoboken-bound trains run "backwards." Several others joined me in boarding the 4-car consist. Only two cars were in use for the light Saturday after noon crowd. But then, Saturday afternoon service to Hoboken wasn't available in recent years

at all. Four inbound morning runs and four outbound in the evening was the extent of service to and from Suffern until recently when service was more than doubled and spaced throughout the day.

The new equipment is quite impressive. The rather small, tinted windows are similar to the Metroliners, but the cars lack the tubular shape of the Metros. Vestibule doors and push-button operated and located at the ends of the cars (in contrast to the center-door Jersey Arrow cars purchased for the PC). A PA system rather than a shouting conductor announces the stops. The 2-and-2 walkover seats are quite comfortable, and interiors are bright and pleasant. The ride is quiet and smooth--a marked contrast to the Stilwell's. For the brand new diesels (basically freight units) 4 passenger cars are hardly a challenge, and acceleration is brisk.

About 20 passengers went all the way to Hoboken, for an on-time arrival at 5:30.

The third and final portion of my ramblings on the EL was a roundtrip to Dover, using the Boonton line outbound and the venerable old MU's inbound via the electrified line. Again, this wouldn't have been possible until recently. Saturday service didn't exist on the Boonton line for years. Now there are two morning runs to Hoboken and two in the late afternoon back to Dover. My departure on the second (6pm) train saw a fair scattering of passengers in the two cars. Speed was rather low between the closely spaced stations for the first half of the run. After that, as darkness descended, the pace quickened and the track seemed a bit better to boot. Seventy-five minutes later, right on time, we eased to a stop in Dover.

It was a 40-minute wait for the next Hoboken-bound MU, and there was no equipment sitting in the station. As I suspected, the consist which arrived from Hoboken would go right back on a tight turnaround. Ten minutes, to be exact. Arrive at 45, leave at 55--the same pattern each hour. Yes, I thought, the EL does have confidence in its on-time performance.Turned out there was a slight delay this time. An eastbound freight rumbled thru at the exact minute the MU was due--on the track it was to use. Thus, it was departure time before it got in, and a dozen or so passengers hopped off. No messing around here, tho. No crew change, just a quick change of ends for the engineer and we were off, in 3 minutes.

The trip from Dover to Hoboken passed without incident amid the rattles and the low level incandescent lighting. Nostalgia, yes. A contrast to those new cars, definitely. Old and new. Electric and diesel. Main line and twisting branches. The EL certainly does have contrasts in its commuter operations.

## AN ENGLISHMAN'S VIEW OF AMTRAK

Amtrak is busily selling overseas customers rail travel with its Amerail Discount of 25% fare reduction, with brochures that promise "special enjoyment." But at least one British traveler in the U.S. in January found something to be desired on some Amtrak long-distance trains.

With British understatement, he was unwilling to register a large complaint, but his list of deficiencies was nevertheless impressive. Riding Miami-Indianapolis-St. Louis on the FLORIDIAN and NATIONAL LIMITED, he found first that the windows were "filthy," so that he missed much of the scenery he'd expected to see. Timetables and brochures given him were out of date, and there was no announcement of time zone changes. Then there was no air conditioning, no lights in the diner, and the food, tho adequate, was not "spectacular" (altho Amtrak's travel brochure distributed in England promised he could "savour tempting meals.") Movies were to be shown on the train, but an equipment failure prevented this also. A Bingo game was substituted, but not wanting this, he went for coffee, but found that it had run out until the following day. He tried instead for some gin, but this was out also.

When his train arrived at Indianapolis in the wee hours, he had to sit on the station platform bench "with other derelicts" about four hours in order to change trains. He described the Indianapolis station as "the true vacuum which nature abhors." This gentleman is described as one who usually does not complain at all, but evidently his trip on Amtrak was a disappointment to him.



(continued from page 8)

the speedometer having been shoved up to the 95-100mph zone while we discussed Friday the 13th problems.

We swung onto the line change east of Cornwall made necessary by construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway lock and dam west of Cornwall, and I returned to the rear dome. I was fascinated, and found it very enjoyable, despite the roar of the turbine below. A tall black man, in a student-radical costume, complete with Afro, then started dominating the conversation. He sounded a combination of H. Rap Brown and French Separatist, fueled by Algerian Liberationist loyalties. I did not participate in this conversation, but it sounded as if there had been some important meetings the previous few days in Montreal, all terribly underground; and this, too, cast a pallor on the afternoon, forcing a second return to my coach.

As we neared the half-way point at Kingston, I encountered a nervous man pointing a flashlight in some of Turbo's electrical cabinets. "How's it running today?" I asked. "Fine, oh just fine," he replied quickly, breathily, with a trace of sweat rolling down his forehead. "Any problems?" I asked. "No, ...none at all," he replied, anxious to end the casual visit. I returned to the dome, and having found both the doomsayer and the black radicals gone, sat down to enjoy the miles awaiting the arrival of the eastbound Turbo scheduled to meet us near Kingston as it was en route to Montreal.

As we approached the big south-trending curve that leads to CN's only major slow-order curve on the Montreal-Toronto run, I noted that the westbound Turbo was stopped; and we passed it at reduced speed. I watched it retreat from the rear dome, and noted a brakeman on the ground behind it. A few minutes later, I asked the Turbo troubleshooter why the eastbound Turbo was stopped. "Oh, he WASN'T stopped! No sir, he was moving right along!" proclaimed the trouble-shooter. "But he was. I saw him," I replied. However, I took the protestations of speed tongue in cheek, and let them go. Later, I was to discover, much to my surprise, that a friend from Berkeley, also as tired of campus life as myself, had also gone east for a Turboride, and was a passenger on the Turbo that had passed mine at Kingston. He reassured me many months later that the eastbound run had indeed been stopped on the tracks when we passed! (Ships that pass in the night had nothing on the friends who pass on the Turbos.)

I was glad I had eaten in Montreal before boarding. Even with a very light passenger load, the CN snack service aboard Turbo was slow and inadequate. Orders took long time to fill, and even as the crew worked, the cabinet doors behind the counter opened and closed incessantly while the lines seemingly did not move at all. It was just a little like Southern Pacific's automat, but without the "auto." When my order finally arrived I seemed almost out of the mood for snacking.

After passing the notorious crossing at Kingston where the meat truck had been sliced open three days earlier, Turbo opened up once again in a phenomenal burst of speed, and the afternoon passed quickly and quietly. Turbo rode well, but there were occasional rough spots; and I noticed that the pendulum suspension sometimes rapidly jerked the car floor to one side or the other on a sharper curve. Having acquired good sea-legs on Puget Sound ferryboats on windy days, it didn't bother me much, but I could see some of the other passengers struggling to stay vertical if caught in the aisles on a curve approach.

I was beginning, tho, to see the many positive qualities of the Turbo that cause them to evoke such fantastic loyalties from the crews. For instance, some of the Turbo stewardae on the two press runs of December 10, upon witnessing the damage to the Turbo that hit the meat truck, burst into tears, as if Turbo had been an injured member of the family. Some of these girls, I was later told, took relatively boring jobs as greeters at the CN office building information desk in Montreal, in order to remain on the CN payroll until Turbo service resumed following the 1969 cessation.

At Belleville, Turbo slowed to pass the station area, and the depot's second floor offices were lined with heavy crowds, all intent on getting a glimpse of the magic wondertrain in full bloom on a scheduled run. Several months later I had the opportunity to talk to Belleville's transit system manager, who said he was no fan of the Turbo. He explained CN had set back the crossing circuits at many grade crossings. This put the gates down much earlier than necessary for all trains except Turbo, and played hob with his bus schedules, he complained.

The day cleared some as we rounded the reverse curves near Port Hope, and sped down the double-tracked line toward Oshawa, beginning of the Toronto suburbs. At Pickering, CN's new Toronto freight bypass swung off to the left, and we were suddenly in GO-train commuter territory. As the suburban sprawl closed in about us, Turbo seemed to be going faster than ever. A red-and-white railbound UFO, almost. As we roared thru Danforth, the train announcer indicated Turbo was on time, and that we would be arriving in approximately 10 minutes. He urged us to remain seated until the train had stopped.

Moments later we rolled over Queen Street, with its long line of rush hour streetcars strung out toward the towers of the downtown financial district. We lurched and rolled thru the interlocking, and as darkness began to fall, rolled slowly down Track One, the VIP, red carpet track, directly adjacent to the Great Hall, reserved for the Very Best of trains. To our left, the 4:40pm Rapido could be seen loading its last passengers; and then, directly beside us, and much above us, office workers crowding a westbound GO Train. With hardly a discernible touch, we stopped. Due in at 4:44pm, we had arrived at 4:40, four minutes early.

The small passenger list made practically no ripple as it moved into the maelstrom of the Great Hall, awash with weekend commuters this Friday evening. Almost an anti-climactical conclusion for a fast and interesting trip.

* * *

I returned to Danforth a few nights later by streetcar to view the 6:10pm Turbo departing for Montreal--it was PACKED with what looked like an airline crowd of businessmen. Surely, I thought, Turbo would catch on quickly.

A day later I visited the top of the T-D bank tower with friends awaiting the arrival of the 12:45pm Turbo from Montreal, a few blocks over and 700 feet down. We waited, and waited. But it never came. Later I heard it had been almost 4 hours late, trapped in a storm lashing the province east of Toronto.

It was subsequently with much displeasure that I heard the news that a cold snap and mechanical problems had put an end to Turbo operations early in 1969, and that CN was seeking damages from United Aircraft that included, among others, a cool $1 million for Turbo's advertising splash in the late fall and early winter of 1968.

******************************

Mr. Lee's reactions to and comments about the Turbo in the above story are particularly significant at this time, when there is some tension in the rail passenger industry over which type of Turbo Amtrak should be pushing--the United Aircraft product described above, or the French-designed Turboliners that are now running between Chicago and St. Louis (see news item in last issue). Mr. Lee's evocation of the scene surrounding the introduction of this type of train to North America may help us understand public and industry reaction to it since then.

The clearest difference between the two turbo designs--and Amtrak is evidently going for the French product, to be built at Rohr in California--is the extraordinary reliability of the Turboliners, about 100% the last few months, while the United Aircraft trains have been plagued by mechanical problems, altho CN apparently has at last resolved them successfully. If the UA turbo could remain as reliable as the French train, we would perhaps prefer it for its unique dome viewing feature. Is there an alternative of redesigning the French carbodies to include such domes?

--J.R.



# *mixed train of thoughts*

AMTRAK'S ADD-A-BUS SYSTEM? When the eastbound EMPIRE BUILDER out of Seattle on Apr. 7 could not accommodate all the passenger boarding, those to points west of Spokane were placed on chartered buses..... THE BROADWAY LIMITED as of Apr. 21 is running two lounges purchased from the U.S. Army. They're numbers 3401 & 3405. Other info on U.S. Army cars bought by Amtrak: Army Nos. 89573-82, sleepers, are now numbered 2510-19 inclusive by Amtrak. And Army lounge cars also in the 89500 series, 10 of them, have been renumbered 3401-10 inclusive. Army sleeper 89583, "Morrow Brook," is now Amtrak 2460. Nos. 2510-19 are former Cascade series 10/5 sleepers of prewar vintage, and "Morrow Brook" is a 12 duplex rmt-4 bdrm sleeper..... A CORRECTION OF an earlier listing: B&O car "Allegheny" was not bought by Amtrak; make that "Schuykill," now numbered 2805..... A FRENCH TURBOLINER took the place of the STATE HOUSE on April 20 and of the WEEKENDER the following day, since the equipment didn't need servicing and was available to replace the conventional trains.....

* * *

NOW BEING REPAINTED in Chicago is an Erie Lackawanna diner off the old PHOEBE SNOW, purchased by Butterworth Tours to use on Rock Island trains. It's being refurbished also..... THE BLACK HAWK encounters a 15-20mph slow order between Chicago and Elmhurst, but nevertheless is sometimes seen arriving 20 minutes early..... IF YOU RIDE the SAN JOAQUIN northbound soon, you can expect to arrive 10 minutes early in Oakland. This new train is one of Amtrak's best time-keepers..... AMTRAK WILL DEDICATE the Brighton Park Turbo facility in Chicago as part of its 3rd Anniversary celebration on May 1. Amtrak has been preparing a short news film on how its preparing for summer service, and this may already have been shown on TV by the time you read this..... OUR ARTICLE ON Amtrak's proposed bi-level cars in the last issue not surprisingly elicited much reader reaction, most of it very favorable to the Klauder designs. Many changes have been made, we are told, in the designs since the Nov. 1 Klauder report, and we will try to bring this info to you as soon as it becomes available. To reply to one reader question about whether mixed designs, e.g., bedrooms and roomettes in one car, were considered, all we know is that Klauder implied that such mixtures could be done, but Amtrak asked only for designs of all-bedroom, or all-roomette cars, etc. Reportedly other manufacturers objected to Amtrak's desire for all stainless steel cars, wanting aluminum or other lighter weight material, but Klauder went along with it. There was a lot of interest in why the cars are not for use in the Northeast Corridor, and we'll try to report on that later. Their restriction to low-platform stations brought some suggestions from readers on getting around this. Incidentally, the portable loading ramps mentioned in our article were meant for handicapped passengers, who apparently would then have to remain on the lower car level. One other minor correction: Klauder proposed only two bed lengths: 6'3" and 6'8"..... THE INTER-AMERICAN is showing great patronage, say reports from Texas. The extended train carries an estimated 10 times as many people as the stub-train to Fort Worth did. In early April, as an example, after 100 passengers were loaded, one more coach was added (at San Antonio); but even this wasn't enough, and by Easter weekend the train carried two extra cars, making the consist: Amtrak baggage-dorm 1413, coach 5424, two Santa Fe coaches 2836-2826, Amtrak coach 5802, diner-lounge 8153, and 10-6 sleepers 2661 & 2707. Missouri Pacific runs the train routinely late--about 45 minutes to 2 hours. The overnight stay in Laredo still hurts southbound business, but as we reported before, Amtrak is supposedly working on making it a thru train across the border..... THE SPOKANE CHAMBER of Commerce has come out in support of a proposed New Orleans to Seattle train, and have asked influential Washington State senators to look into it. Texas groups are also pushing this..... RAILFAN RADIO PROGRAM: in Chicago area on WOJO-FM Sundays at 10:30pm, with the help of 20th C. Railroad Club.....

A MAJOR ERROR appeared in our news article, "DOT Report on Amtrak Equipment Leaked to Press," on page 6 of last issue: the United Aircraft Turbos would take 22 months longer to build, not 22 months less, than the French Turboliners..... AN AMTRAK SPOKESMAN told the 20th Century RR Club that the corporation now has requests for about 450 new services around the country. Obviously only a few of these could be filled, given the equipment shortages. Roger Lewis said this month that Amtrak is about 500 cars short of its present needs to handle its passenger volume. Quote: "When we went back over our figures we found that what we had projected for 1977 had happened here and now, today. We had a crisis on our hands." And what is Amtrak doing about that crisis? Well, it's ordering or planning to order around 500 new cars, including Turbos. But delivery on these will take about 2 years. Our Ken Maylath did some simple arithmetic and concluded that the corporation will continue its present equipment shortage thru at least 1977, assuming a continuing rise in patronage, demand for new routes, and attrition of old cars thru wrecks and old age. Looks as if Amtrak should be ordering a lot more right now..... THERE'S MUCH PRESSURE on Amtrak right now to initiate a New Orleans-Jacksonville route, with influential Senator Huey Long among those backing a new train..... AUTO-TRAIN CORPORATION began running full-page newspaper ads in the Midwest April 22 for its coming Midwest-Florida service. When that begins, Auto-Train will remove the third set of equipment presently running on the East Coast to provide cars for the new service..... THE BROADWAY LIMITED, as of April 21, is using a pair of lounges purchased from the U.S. Army and renumbered as Amtrak 3401 & 3405..... THE ILLINOIS ZEPHYR as of April 12 has its CNW bi-level equipment back, with a snack bar car, Amtrak #9601, formerly CNW 903 "Sip & Snack" car, all refurbished..... THE MYSTERY OF the disappearing domes from the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR is hereby mostly cleared up: the ex-SP dome lounges are being put thru the shop--#9370 is about ready at Rail Systems in Mira Loma, Calif., with new upholstery, and center bars on the big windows to fulfill federal crashworthiness standards. They are to run on the SFZ between Denver & Oakland only, so every consist in that scenic portion will have one. The Disco-Pub cars mentioned here last time are no doubt converted Army hospital cars which are due for completion at Rail Systems by May 1, and are evidently to go on the SFZ. They have 34 lounge seats, a piano, a kitchen in the former baggage area with microwave oven and 220v grill, and are finished in Amtrak's disco-pub purple-red. The baggage doors will remain on them, and they'll be numbered in Amtrak's 3400 series (former Army 89500's)..... THE GOLDEN STATE, or whatever the SUPER CHIEF will be called this summer, is to consist of six hi-level coaches, hi-level lounge & diner, 4 sleepers L.A.-Chicago (one 11-bdrm, one 8-2, two 10-6's), and 2 sleepers L.A.-N.Y. (10-6's). Dome lounge and diner will also run all summer, and there will be no mail car after June 8. (Bear in mind that planned consists are always subject to change, and that info we print is the best we have on current plans)..... WHERE CAN YOU get information on Amtrak passenger cars, their former identification and builder, etc., such as we often include in our reports? Readers often want to know a good source for this. One such that we recommend is the new "Railway Passenger Car Annual," Vol. 1, 1973-74, which has been advertised in these pages. It costs $5 from RPC Publications, Box 211, Park Forest, IL 60466 (Illinois residents add 5% tax). It also covers CN and CP and American private railroads and transit systems..... AMTRAK'S FARE INCREASE of 5% April 16 isn't the only nationwide increase for travelers. Domestic airline rates went up 6% the same date, for flights within the 48 contiguous states, due to jet fuel price rises..... SIX "MOST BEAUTIFUL" train trips--what are they, according to Amtrak? Family Weekly asked them and printed their reply April 14: COAST STARLIGHT, EMPIRE SERVICE, BROADWAY LIMITED, NORTH COAST HIAWATHA, EMPIRE BUILDER, and SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR..... COMING THIS SUMMER: Amtrak is to give the SUPER CHIEF and SUNSET LIMITED "premier status," which generally means all refurbished cars, PSR's, on-board service directors, etc..... COMING NEXT ISSUE in this newsletter: the third anniversary of Amtrak operations.....



# Express Ads

DISCOVER AMERICA WITH AMTRAK! This year, train your family at vacationtime. It's a valuable experience with Amtrak's money-saving family plan fares. For helpful vacation planning and reservations, write GREAT WESTERN TOURS, 639 Market St., San Francisco 94105, or call us at (415) 398-2994.

AMTRAK AUTHORIZED AGENTS CAN HELP obtain your reservations for ALL rail travel. No need for you to hang on the telephone for hours when we will do it for you and then mail tickets to you. Make your summer travel plans and RESERVE NOW! Let's Travel Tours, P O Box 146, 501 South D St., Perris, CA 92370. (714)657-4785.

Order souvenir packet of material issued for first day service of new San Joaquin. Includes brief history of valley passenger service plus reprint of June 1940 descriptive folder, June 1941 and Oct 1962 timetable and 1956 Santa Fe log of your trip. $2.75 postpaid. (Calif. residents add 17¢ tax.) Orange Empire Trolley Museum, P O Box 548, Perris CA 92370.

AMTRAK WAS CREATED to be a profit-making company, but at the expense of 2, 3 and 4 year olds? Please protest to your Congressmen and to Amtrak the elimination of the free passage for children under 5. J. Szczepaniec, Buffalo, NY.

FANTASTIC PUBLIC TIMETABLE BARGAINS. Over 100 grab bags sold so far to delighted collectors. $13 worth of timetables only $6.00, $30 worth only $13. Early to late 60's, nice variety, condition excellent. Also sell those amazing clear plastic slip covers for public timetables. Only 6¢ each. Tom Coval, 21 E. Robin Rd., Holland PA 18966.

Railroad Uniform Buttons 50¢ each postpaid. Erie, Frisco, Georgia, Monon, Southern, Seaboard, Milwaukee, Reading, Central Vermont, Southern Pacific, Western Pacific, Santa Fe, Illinois Central, Jersey Central, Rock Island, and Washington and Old Dominion. J. Lajoie, 22 Stevens, Methuen, Mass. 01844.

QUALITY B&W NEGATIVES: 35mm, 2¼x2¼, 616 negatives of many major lines, shortlines and industrials. All negs fine-grain processed. Cabs, switchers & pass. units. PC, SOU, NW, SP, BN, FP&E, D&R, GN&A, MRR, P&LE, WM, B&O, C&O, EL, L&S, E&M, KCS, P&S, C&I, etc. List & sample 50¢. T.N. Colbert, 1008 Englewood, Parma, OH 44134.

NAPTRAS - North American Passenger Train Preservation Society, dedicated to the preservation, improvement, expansion and promotion of rail passenger service. Join Us, and really DO something to help the passenger train! Information: Scott Rogers, NAPTRAS, RR 3, Freeport, Illinois 61032.

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ADVERTISING RATES FOR RTN: Express Ads 25¢ per line, minimum $1--line is 80 typewriter characters & spaces. Display Ads: $15 full page (5x8"); $7.50 half page; $3.75 quarter page. Send remittance with orders under $15 to Message Media, P. O. Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

# *Urban-Suburban Transit*

BART WON'T GET additional money from the state, declared a group of California legislators this month, unless B. R. Stokes is removed as head of the transit agency. He continues to survive in his position, however, and the outlook for state help in meeting BART's present deficit appears bleak. BART and Rohr Corporation appear on the brink of suing each other for damages in the fiasco over improperly performing cars. The opening of the transbay BART line may now be delayed until January, 1975. As part of an American Transit Association meeting in San Francisco in mid-April, 400 officials from the U.S. and Canada got a ride thru BART's underway tube, not yet open to general use. Then they rode a regular train on the Concord line, which proceeded to stop mysteriously for about 10 minutes.

PEOPLE MOVER BLOWUP? Prominent newspaper reports informed Americans in mid-April that the federal government may have to destroy--literally--its experimental people mover under construction in Morgantown, West Virginia. The 2.2-mile apparatus on the West Virginia University campus has cost $57 million thus far, and would cost over $115 million to complete--nearly ten times its original estimated cost. UMTA administrator Robert A. Hemmes, reports the N.Y. Times, was forced to resign over the debacle. He had been largely responsible for beginning the ill-fated project. The project was begun reportedly as a gesture of friendship to House Commerce Committee chairman Harley Staggers, who has large control over the DOT's budget. The Wall Street Journal took the opportunity to editorialize against government research, pointing to the project begun with "costly haste."

SAN FRANCISCO MUNI has begun its first newspaper advertising campaign in memory. The reason is the initiation of its new $11-per-month "Fast-Pass," good for unlimited riding on all its vehicles during a single calendar month. The plan starts May 1 on a 6-month trial basis. They are available by mail from: Fast-Pass, Muni. Rwy., 949 Presidio Ave., San Francisco CA 94115.

GENERAL MOTORS CORPORATION has denied, in a 67-page document, that it was responsible for the widespread destruction of streetcar lines thru its National City Lines that took control of transit lines beginning in the 1930's (see RTN, 2nd Feb. issue). An earlier document by Bradford C. Snell, aired before a Senate subcommittee in February, charged that GM was highly influential in the downfall of over 100 streetcar systems. Transportation writer Harre Demoro in the Oakland (CA) Tribune April 17 points out that GM's rebuttal uses information from his newspaper, but omits some early news reports, for example that 45 trolley buses were ordered for the Eastbay system but were shipped away without being used when National City Lines took over and decided to run GM motor buses instead.

NEW YORK TIMES reports (April 21) that the N.Y. State Controller has said that the performance of the Transit Authority's 300 new R-44 subway cars, built by the St. Louis Car Division of General Steel Industries, is so poor that the manufacturer should be sued to pay for ridding the equipment of its problems.

RAPID TRANSIT PROPOSAL for Los Angeles, at a cost of $6.6 billion, will go to voters in November. It would include 19 miles of "people mover" route at a cost of $365 million, to link major peripheral garages with the downtown core. Meanwhile, a $1.2 billion transit issue has a good chance of appearing on the ballot in San Diego in November.

UMTA HAS APPROVED expenditure of $150,000 for a technical study on expansion and modernization of the Staten Island Ferry terminal complexes at St. George & Whitehall St.

TOWN OF EMERYVILLE, California, is seeking ferry boat service to San Francisco. The plan hinges upon reversal of a law that prohibits such service within several miles of the Bay Bridge. Two ferry operators are interested, and it is believed that the boats would be financially self-sustaining.




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